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Iraq

Status Report

February 11, 2009



Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
U.S. Department of State

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HIGHLIGHTS



- **Claims of Election Fraud Under Investigation** (*POLITICAL*, page 4).
- **Iraq Reaching Out to Its Neighbors on Shared Oil and Gas Fields** (*ECONOMIC*, page 10).
- **UN Secretary General Visits Baghdad** (*DIPLOMATIC*, page 18).
- **Suicide Attack in Diyala Follows Successful Provincial Elections** (*SECURITY*, page 20).

POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation



After success of provincial elections, Iraqi government addresses challenges

Claims of Election Fraud Under Investigation:

- There have been complaints of fraud related to the January 31 provincial elections in Iraq in several provinces. Iraq's senior electoral official told the press that some of the complaints could potentially affect results. Thus far, Iraqis, even those who had previously threatened violence, such as tribal sheikhs in Anbar, are seeking resolution via Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) official channels. "We are armed by papers and evidence," said Sheikh Ahmed Ramadi, the leader of Ramadi's Awakening Party, "and paper is the strongest weapon. That is the weapon we will use." IHEC released preliminary results on February 5; final results are expected by the end of February. (Please see the previous Iraq Status Report for details on the preliminary results.)

POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation



After success of provincial elections, Iraqi government addresses challenges

Women's Affairs Minister Submits Resignation:

- Iraq's Minister of State for Women's Affairs, Dr. Nawal Majid Hamid Al-Samara'e, submitted her resignation February 5, noting that there are too few resources to support women, many of whom are widows, unemployed, or detained. The Prime Minister's office has not yet responded.

Trial for Iraqi Shoe Thrower Set for February 19:

- The trial for the journalist who threw his shoes at former President George W. Bush is set for February 19. An appellate court denied Muntadar al-Zaidi's appeal, which sought to reduce the charges from "assaulting" to "insulting" a foreign leader. Zaidi faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted. The trial will take place in Iraq's Central Criminal Court inside Baghdad's International Zone.



POLITICAL – Government of Iraq

Coalition Affiliation (at time of appointment)
United Iraq Alliance
Kurdistani Alliance
Iraqi Accord Front
Iraqi National List
Other / Independent

(F) = Female

***Formerly Iraqiya

Prime Minister
Nuri Kamil al-Maliki

Deputy Prime Minister
Rafi Hiad Jiad al-Issawi

Deputy Prime Minister
Dr. Barham Ahmed Salih

President
Jalal Talabani
Deputy President
Tariq al-Hashimi
Deputy President
Adil Abd al-Mahdi

Minister of Agriculture
Ali Husayn Kadhum al-Bahadili

Minister of Communications
Faruq Abd al-Qadir Abd al-Rahman

Minister of Culture
Mahir Dilli Ibrahim al-Hadithi

Minister of Defense
Abd al-Qadir Muhammad Jasim al-Aubaidi

Minister of Displacement & Migration
Dr. Abd al-Samad Rahman Sultan

Minister of Electricity
Dr. Karim Wahid al-Hasan

Minister of Education
Dr. Khudayr Mousa Jaffar al-Khuzai

Minister of Environment
Dr. Nermin Othman Hassan (F)

Minister of Finance
Bayan Jabr

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hoshiyar Mahmud Zebari

Minister of Health
Dr. Salih Mahdi Mutlab al-Hasnawi

Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Abid Dhiyab al-Ujayli

Minister of Human Rights
Eng. Wijdan Mikhail Salim (F)

Minister of Industry & Minerals
Fawzi Fransu Hariri

Minister of Interior
Jawad Kadhum Eidan al-Bulani

Minister of Justice
*** Safa al-Din Muhammad al-Safi (Acting)

Minister of Housing & Construction
Bayan Dizayee (F)

Minister of Labor & Social Affairs
Eng. Mahmud Muhammad Jawad al-Radi

Minister of Oil
Dr. Husayn Ibrahim al-Shahristani

Minister of Planning
Ali Ghalib Baban

Minister of Trade
Dr. Abd al-Falah Hassan Hummadi al-Sudani

Minister of Science & Technology
Dr. Raid Jahid Fahmi

Minister of Municipalities & Public Works
Riyadh Abd al-Hamza Gharib

Minister of Transportation
Amir Abd al-Jabar Ismail

Minister of Water Resources
Dr. Abd al-Latif Jamal Rashid

Minister of Youth & Sports
Eng. Jasim Muhammad Jaffar

Minister of State for Civil Society Affairs
Dr. Thamer Jafar al-Zubaidi

Minister of State for National Dialogue
Dr. Akram Mousa Hadi al-Hakim

Minister of State for National Security
Eng. Shirwan Kamil al-Waili

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
Dr. Muhammad Munajid Aifan al-Dulaymi

Minister of State for Provinces Affairs
Dr. Khulud Sami Izzara al-Majun (F)

Minister of State for Tourism and Antiquities
Dr. Qahtan Abbas Numanal-Jabbari

Minister of State for Women's Affairs
Dr. Nawal Majid Hamid (F)

Minister of State for CoR Affairs
Safa al-Din Muhammad al-Safi

Minister of State at Large
Muhammad Abbas Muhammad al-Uraybi

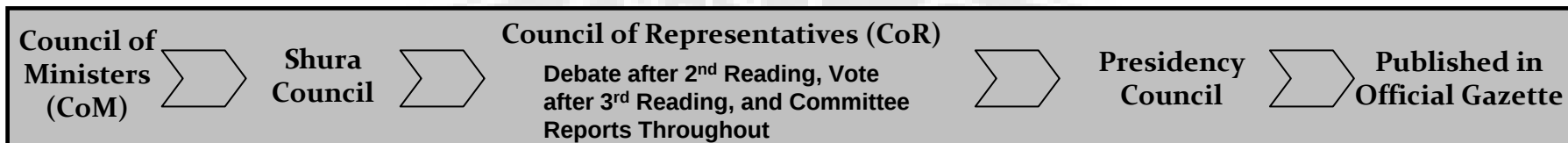
Minister of State at Large
Ali Muhammad Ahmad

Minister of State at Large
Hasan Radhi Kazim al-Sari



POLITICAL – Key Legislation

Legislative Process



- **Hydrocarbons Package:** The Framework Law was resubmitted to the Oil and Gas Committee on October 26 and then returned to the Council of Ministers. There has been no progress on the other three laws in the package.
- **Budget:** First reading held November 24, 2008. The Ministry of Finance then revised the budget to take into account falling oil prices. A second reading and debate are expected in February.

POLITICAL - Refugee Update



- **Regional governments report hosting as many as 2 million Iraqi refugees.**
- **The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that over 2.8 million Iraqis are displaced inside Iraq.**
- **In FY08, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration contributed \$287.08 million to international organizations and nongovernmental organizations to assist displaced Iraqis inside the country and in the region.**
- **The U.S. admitted 13,823 Iraqi refugees in FY08 (which ended September 30).**
- **Since the program's inception in FY07, 20,088 Iraqi refugees have been admitted for U.S. resettlement; in FY09 alone, the U.S. seeks to admit a minimum of 17,000 Iraqi refugees.**
- **In FY 2008, a total of 1,142 Special Immigrant Visa (SIVs) were issued for Afghan and Iraqi translators and interpreters (under the Section 1059 program).**
- **As of December 2008, a total of 1,311 SIVs have been issued in FY09 (under the Section 1244 program).**

ECONOMIC – Oil



Oil prices seem to have stabilized around \$40 – 45 per barrel, well below the price Iraq needs to fully fund its 2009 budget. Iraq has sufficient fiscal revenues to cover a 2009 deficit, however Iraq must make less optimistic assumptions for 2010.

Crude Oil Update:

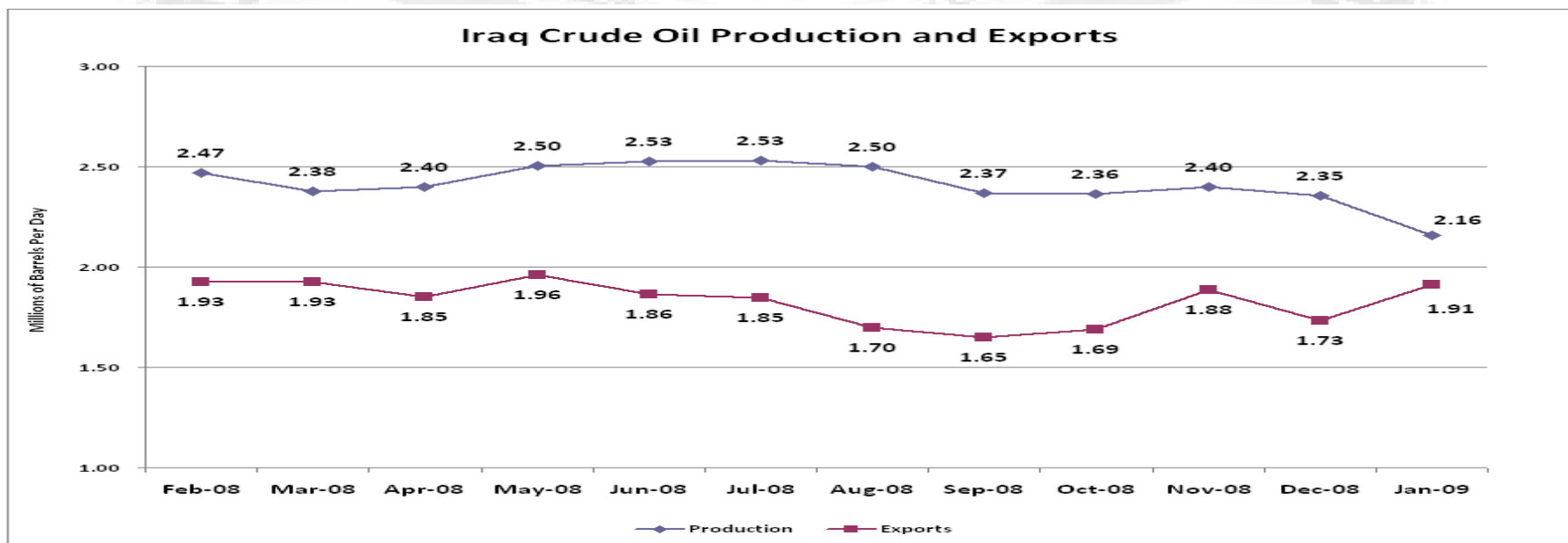
Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:

Basrah Light at \$39.49/barrel

Dated Brent at \$44.96/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$40.50/barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$44.15/barrel



Revenue estimates:

2007: \$41.0 Billion

2008: \$61.9 Billion *

2009 (ytd): \$2.3 Billion

* Estimate adjusted as a result of newly-available Iraqi data.



ECONOMIC – Oil

Oil is not only key to the Iraqi economy, but also plays a pivotal role in its relationship with its neighbors

Iraq Reaching Out to Its Neighbors on Shared Oil and Gas Fields:

- **Iraq continues discussions with Iran and Kuwait on shared oil and gas fields. Iraqi Oil Minister Husayn al-Shahristani is continuing talks with Iran to unitize shared fields and hopes to have some agreement concluded in March 2009. Meanwhile, Iraq's Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Mohammed Haj Humud stated that Iraq and Kuwait have reached a preliminary agreement over the contiguous field known as Rumaila in Iraq and Ratqa in Kuwait. The preliminary agreement lays out the technical and legal mechanisms to unitize the shared field. The two countries have also agreed to contract international consultants to prepare a plan for the joint development of the field. Prior to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Saddam Hussein accused Kuwait of stealing oil via horizontal drilling. Discussions with both countries are critical because this impacts Iraq's ability to develop its fields without creating new tensions with its neighbors.**

ECONOMIC – Oil



Oil is not only key to the Iraqi economy, but also plays a pivotal role in its relationship with its neighbors

Payment Dispute Delays Iraqi Oil Exports from Turkish Port of Ceyhan:

- **Iraqi oil exports from the Turkish port of Ceyhan have been slightly delayed as a result of a payment dispute between Iraqi and Turkish oil companies. Due to the payment dispute, Turkish authorities are requiring that an additional 600,000-800,000 barrels of Iraqi crude oil from Kirkuk be held in storage at the Ceyhan terminal. A shipping agent at the port said two vessels were waiting to load oil. Once the payment row is resolved, normal loading is expected to resume in a week**

ECONOMIC – Oil



Oil is not only key to the Iraqi economy, but also plays a pivotal role in its relationship with its neighbors

Minister of Oil Speaks about OPEC Oil Cuts:

- **Iraq's Minister of Oil Husayn al-Shahristani told an oil and gas symposium in Baghdad February 7 that OPEC members are expected to cut oil production to raise the price per barrel to \$70. The minister also used the occasion to reiterate his objection to oil deals signed between the KRG and oil companies, calling them the main impediment towards the approval of a hydrocarbons law. Shahristani also called on the Government of Iraq to work around bureaucracy and allow the Ministry of Oil to have a say in contracting to hasten the development of Iraq's oil and gas infrastructure. The minister went on to say new pipelines cannot be built because the 2009 budget has not been approved, meaning the ministry cannot begin new capital projects.**

ECONOMIC – Oil



Oil is not only key to the Iraqi economy, but also plays a pivotal role in its relationship with its neighbors

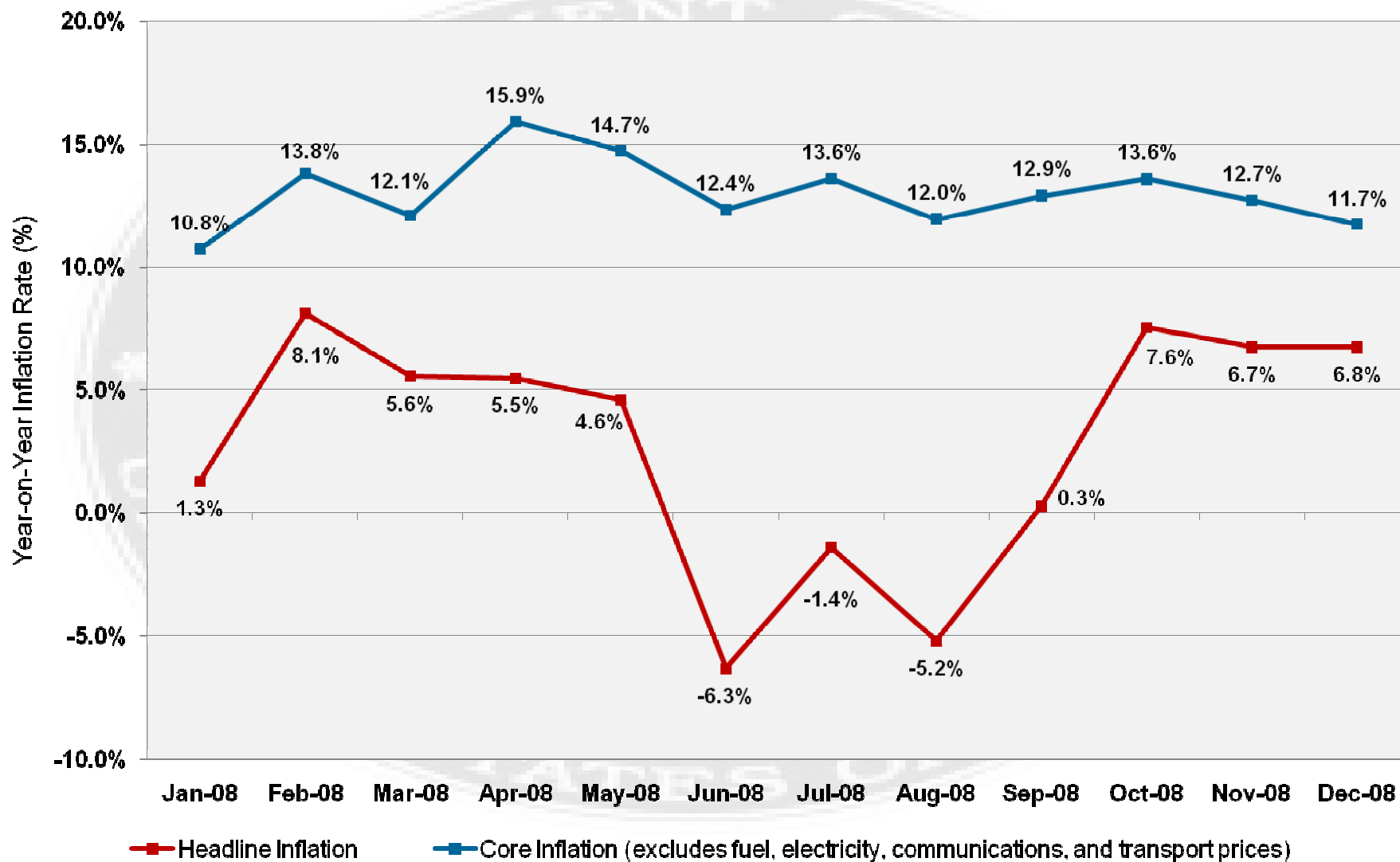
Iraq Signs Agreements to Build Four New Refineries:

- According to Iraqi oil sources, the Iraqi Ministry of Oil's State Company for Oil Projects (SCOP) signed an agreement with U.S. company Foster Wheeler for a Front End Engineering and Design (FEED) contract valued at approximately \$65 million. Under the terms of the contract Foster Wheeler will design and build a 300,000 barrel per day (bpd) refinery in Nassiriyah. In addition to the Foster Wheeler deal, three other FEED contracts were signed to build new refineries with a combined total capacity of 750,000 bpd. The U.S.'s Shaw & Webster will build two 150,000 bpd refineries in Maysan and Kirkuk. France's Technip will construct a 150,000 bpd refinery in Karbala in a deal valued at \$27 million.

ECONOMIC - Fiscal and Monetary Affairs



Year-on-Year Inflation



ECONOMIC – Public Sector



Iraq's transportation sector, a vital part of Iraq's economic development and diversification, is beginning to grow

KRG Considering Rail Project:

- Kurdistan Regional Government Minister of Transport Saeed Sufi said recently the KRG is considering a proposal from unnamed Austrian and Russian companies to build and finance a rail network which would connect the Kurdish provinces. The minister did not say if the railway would be connected to the wider Iraqi rail network.

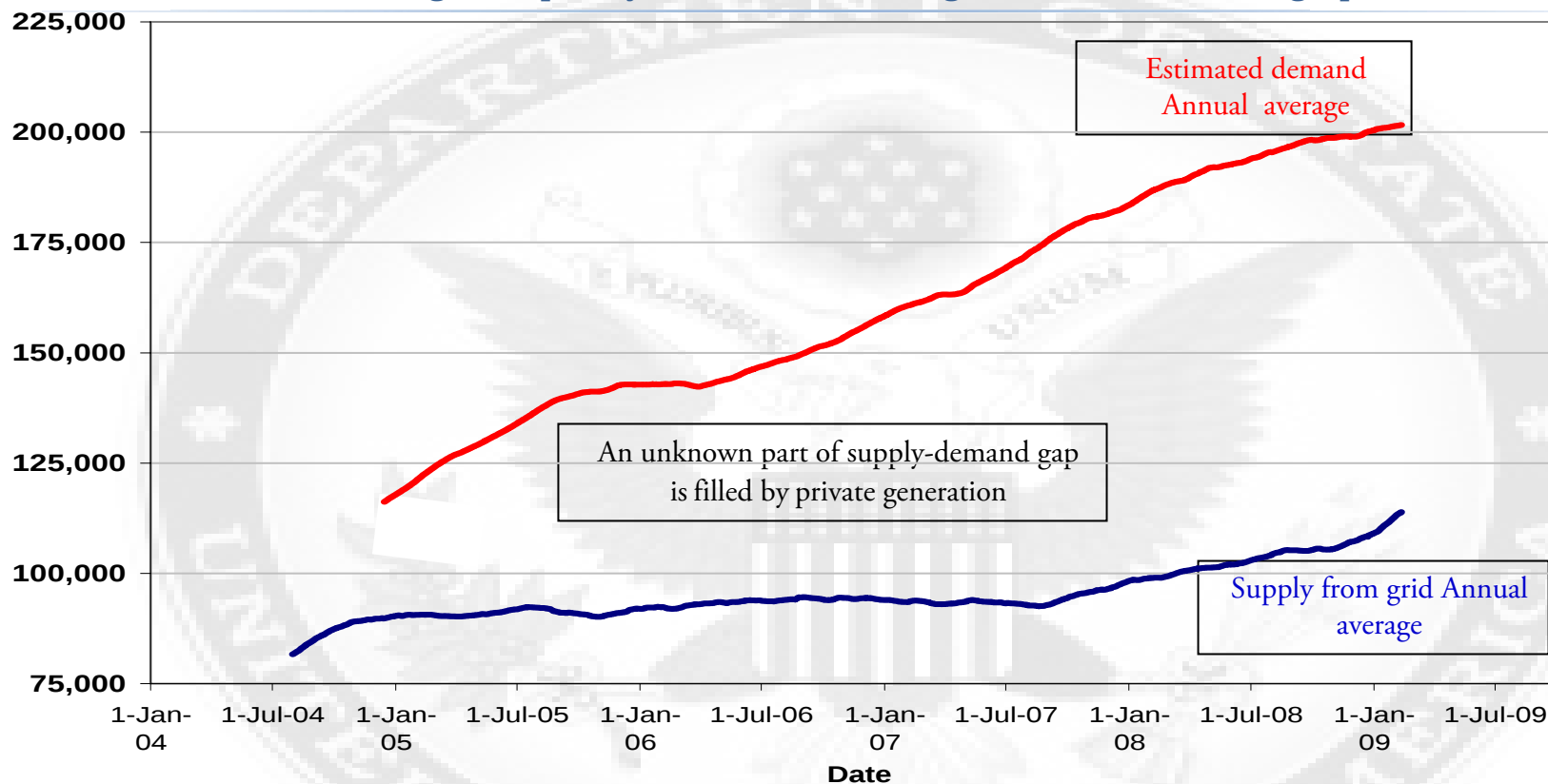
Minister of Transport Says Iraq Ready to Expand International Air Links:

- Minister of Transport Amir Jabbar indicated that Iraq is ready to begin granting licenses to international air carriers willing to establish air links with Iraq. The minister said talks have already been held with Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and Turkey. Presently, international service to Iraq is mainly through charter flights, although Royal Jordanian Airlines has a commuter flight between Amman and Baghdad.

Public Services – Electricity



GOI needs to strengthen policy actions to manage demand and usage patterns



- Daily electricity supply from the grid February 4-10 was 38% above the year-earlier period and met 64% of demand, compared with 49% for the year-earlier period.
- Based on estimated demand, hours of power for February 3-9 after meeting demand from essential services were Baghdad 14.6 and Iraq 14.4. Year-ago levels were Baghdad 8.1 and Iraq 10.4.



Beyond Baghdad



“As we conclude this national epic vote, we will be impatient to learn the results. I hope this will be a strong motivation for the continuation of the political process. Moreover, I hope that we will forget all the troubles that prevailed during the period before the election to build Iraq’s future. [translated]”

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki

Recent Highlights

An Iraqi woman casts her ballot in the country's provincial elections in the Azamiyah area of north Baghdad, Iraq, Saturday, Jan. 31, 2009.

Muthanna

PRTs approved approximately 55 projects valued at \$3.7M countrywide aimed at supporting local NGO efforts to improve voter education, capabilities of local governorate election offices, and direct support for election sites.

The Muthanna PRT funded The Elite Group of Students in Iraq *Get Out the Vote Street Theatre* project, an indigenous street theater initiative with local journalists, actors and GEO staff that encouraged voter turn out on election day, promoted freedom of speech, and encouraged people to participate in the democratic process.

Dhi Qar

The Dhi Qar PRT assisted the Shining Hope Organization with their *Simulating the Mechanics of Election Day* effort that taught rural, illiterate, handicapped and other voters from traditionally marginalized groups about the mechanics of voting in the upcoming elections in order to ensure that they understood how votes were cast and counted and to encourage them to participate in the 2009 provincial elections.

Ninewa

The Ninewa PRT supported the efforts of Doves of Peace to produce 5 TV spots that ran on two local TV stations 15 days prior to elections. The spots were approximately 60 seconds in length and featured local actors preparing to vote, entering the voting station, entering a voting booth, and casting a ballot. One segment focused on the ballot itself to familiarize potential voters with the overall ballot.



DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement

Foreign leaders visit Baghdad, KRG expands regional engagement

UN Secretary General Visits Baghdad:

- During his February 6 visit to Baghdad, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon praised Iraq's elections and the progress made in the country. Noting that this progress needs to continue, the UNSG said "I believe you have come such a long way, but still you have to go a far way to say you will fully be able to enjoy genuine freedom and security and prosperity." The UNSG met President Jalal Talabani and later held talks with Prime Minister Maliki. This was his second trip to Iraq.

French President and FM Visit Baghdad:

- French President Nicolas Sarkozy visited Baghdad February 10 - the first such visit by a French head of state. Iraqi President Jalal Talabani held a televised outdoor ceremony to welcome President Sarkozy and French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner. Sarkozy pledged French support for economic reconstruction, noting at a joint press conference with Prime Minister Maliki: "I came to show France's willingness to take part in the economic development of Iraq, in the rehabilitation of its infrastructure. Our collaboration has no limits." President Sarkozy also commended Iraq for successfully holding provincial elections and encouraged greater European involvement in maintaining stability in Iraq. He said: "it is in Europe's interest to extend a hand here [Iraq] and to support the peace."

DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement



Foreign leaders visit Baghdad, KRG expands regional engagement

Qatar to Open Consulate in Northern Iraq:

- **Qatar's state owned news agency reports that the government of Qatar may open a consulate in northern Iraq. This follows the February 8 signing of a memorandum of understanding by the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al-Thani and KRG President Massoud Barzani during the latter's visit to the Emirate. The Kurdish Minister of Reconstruction and Housing stated that the agreement refers to "the possibility of opening a Qatari consulate in Kurdistan with the permission of the Iraqi Foreign Minister and a Kurdistan office in Qatar."**



SECURITY - **Situation Update**

Although attack levels are at their lowest since August 2003, recent incidents demonstrate that security threats still remain

Suicide Attack in Diyala Follows Successful Provincial Elections:

- A February 5 suicide attack in the town of Khanaqin, Diyala province killed at least 12 people and wounded another 15, according to Iraqi officials. Khanaqin police chief Colonel Azad Eisa said most of the victims were Kurdish. Khanaqin, which is close to the semi-autonomous Kurdish region, has been a flashpoint for ethnic and political tension between the Government of Iraq (GOI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The attack came days after Iraq held largely peaceful provincial elections.

Iraqi Security Forces Deploy to Secure Arba'een Pilgrims:

- The GOI has deployed 40,000 Iraqi Security Forces along the main roadways and routes leading to, and in Karbala to protect the thousands of pilgrims expected to participate in the ceremonial pilgrimage to the city. Two reported roadside bomb attacks February 8 and 11 in Baghdad have already killed three pilgrims and wounded another 15 others. Shi'a pilgrims from across the country will travel to Karbala to mark the end of 40 days of mourning following Ashura, which celebrates the anniversary of the seventh century death of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Muhammed.

SECURITY - Situation Update



Although attack levels are at their lowest since August 2003, recent incidents demonstrate that security threats still remain

Suicide Attack Deadliest for U.S. Forces in Nine Months:

- **A suicide bomber attacked a U.S. patrol February 9 in Mosul by driving a vehicle into a temporary police checkpoint. The attack, which was the deadliest for the U.S. military in nine months, killed four U.S. soldiers and wounded two Iraqi police officers and a passerby.**



SECURITY – Security Transition

NTM-I support increases as Iraqi Security Forces assume more responsibilities

Estonia Transitions From MNF-I to NTM-I:

- The Republic of Estonia transitioned its forces from Multi-National Force- Iraq (MNF-I) to supporting the NATO Training Mission- Iraq (NTM-I) during a ceremony at Camp Victory February 7. Serving under MNF-I since 2003, Estonian forces conducted over 350 operations and 2,300 patrols, discovered several hundred weapons caches, and confiscated over 1,000 small arms and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) and over three tons of explosives and ammunition. Estonian military officers will continue to support NTM-I, advising and training Iraqi Security Forces.

Iraqi Police Take Control of Last Fallujah Checkpoint:

- The Fallujah District Chief of Police assumed control of the city's last entry control point (ECP) that remained under U.S. responsibility February 5. Entry control points are manned security positions that screen people attempting to enter specific areas and are often used as a security measure around cities to protect the population. Iraqi Security Forces now control all ECPs in Fallujah, further reducing Coalition Forces' presence in the city. Coalition Forces have been slowly stepping back from an overt security role in Anbar province as Iraqi Police and Army units increase their own security posture and assume greater responsibility.

SECURITY – Security Transition



NTM-I support increases as Iraqi Security Forces assume more responsibilities

JSS Salmyiat Back in Iraqi Government Control:

- **Coalition Forces transferred Joint Security Station (JSS) Salmyiat in northwest Baghdad to the Iraqi Ministry of Transportation (MOT) during a ceremony February 5. The MOT plans to return JSS Salmyiat to its one time use as a rail and rail car production facility, which is anticipated to improve the country's public transportation capabilities and provide jobs for local citizens.**



SECURITY - Iraqi Security Forces

Iraq Security Forces as of Dec 31, 2008 ^a			
Component	Current Authorized Personnel ^b	Assigned Personnel ^c	Total Trained Personnel to date ^d
Ministry of Interior (MoI) Forces ^e			
Iraqi Police Service ^f	334,739	305,831	220,013
National Police	46,580	43,538	56,577
Border Enforcement ^g	45,550	40,976	38,846
Total MoI	426,869	390,345	315,436
Ministry of Defense (MoD) Forces ^h			
Army	174,805	196,127	240,058
Army Training and Support Forces ⁱ	22,345	19,990	22,930
Air Force	3,690	2,148	4,572
Navy	3,596	1,887	1,494
Total MoD	204,436	220,152	269,054
Counter Terrorism Bureau			
Special Operations ^j	6,190	4,209	4,564
Total Iraqi Security Forces	637,495	614,706	589,054

▪ Increase of 1.6K assigned and 8.5K trained since last report.

a. Numbers do not include ministry staffs.

b. Numbers reflect Government of Iraq (GOI) authorizations.

c. Numbers are based upon GOI payroll data and do not reflect present for duty totals.

d. Numbers reflect total Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) personnel trained to date, some of which are no longer assigned due to casualties, AWOL, and normal separation.

e. MoI strength excludes other services within Ministry Of Interior (MOI), including the MOI HQ, MOI Forensics, Facility Protection Services, and contracted guards.

f. The Iraqi Police Service consists of all provincial police forces (station, patrol, traffic, and special units) assigned to all 18 Iraqi provinces.

g. Data associated with Ports of Entry Directorate has been pulled out of the Directorate of Border Enforcement. Expect authorized and assigned strengths to fluctuate as the new PoED organization takes shape.

h. The Ministry Of Defense (MOD) authorized numbers are derived from Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTOEs).

i. The MoD Army Training and Support Forces include logistics units and training center cadre.

j. Does not include personnel assigned to Counterterrorism Bureau (CTB) or Counterterrorism Command (CTC) headquarters.



CONTACT INFORMATION

This brief draws from multiple sources. References are cited on the following pages.

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- Department of State, Section 1227 Report on Iraq
<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/1227/c26862.htm>
- Department of Defense, Section 9010 Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq
http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/9010_Report_to_Congress_Dec_08.pdf

Please forward all questions and/or comments to:

NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov



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- BBC, February 5, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7871938.stm; NY Times, February 9, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/10/world/middleeast/10anbar.html?scp=1&sq=iraq%20elections%20acceptance&st=cse>

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- AFP, February 8, http://www.kuwaittimes.net/read_news.php?newsid=MTE3MjQzNTI4MA==; NY Times, February 8, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/09/world/middleeast/09iraqshoe.html?ref=world>

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- Reuters, February 5, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/oilRpt/idUKL512181420090205?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0&sp=true>
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- Middle East Business Intelligence, February 9, http://www.meed.com/news/2009/02/iraq_ready_to_issue_licences_to_foreign_airlines.html

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Slide 17:

- Source for Stories: QRF Newsletter (04Feb09) and QRF Database
- Source for Prime Minister Nuri al-Malki's quote:
http://www.alternet.org/waroniraq/124871/maliki_leads_in_iraqi_election:_voters_see_party_as_'most_expedient_way_to_end_the_occupation'/

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- Reuters, February 6, <http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GCA-iraq/idUSTRE51521L20090206>
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